

# THE ASYLUM

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Numismatic Bibliomania Society

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We will revive those times, and in our memories  
Preserve, and still keep fresh, like flowers in water,  
Those happier days; when at our eyes our souls  
Kindled their mutual fires, their equal beams  
Shot and returned, till link'd and twin'd in one,  
They chain'd our hearts together.—DANIEL.

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No. 10.]

PHILADELPHIA.—OCTOBER.

[1831.]

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*"A book collector has friends everywhere. The bookseller from whom you buy books is, more frequently than not, your friend. There is a bond between you that transcends the commercial transaction. For you've established something (call it rapport) between you that is personal, almost spiritual if you will. He understands your interests and your needs and the compulsion which brings you to him. (And let it be freely admitted, his magnet is as compelling to the bibliophile as the bar is to the boozier.) The bookseller becomes inextricably identified with you, your library, your intellectual life."*

WILLIAM TARG  
1907-1999

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# The Asylum

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Masthead of the literary magazine *Atkinson’s Casket*, which is described by Joel Orosz in this volume.



## The Second United States Mint and *The Casket*

Joel J. Orosz

It is a tale strange to relate, for it recounts how the American public's first look at the second Mint of the United States was observed through a casket — or, more precisely — through *The Casket*, a now-defunct magazine in Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> If this isn't peculiar, or perhaps unsettling, enough, *The Casket* in question was also intimately connected to Edgar Allan Poe. The cast of characters only expands from there, for Benjamin Franklin, William Shakespeare, Emmanuel Joseph Attinelli, plus an early auction sale of medals and the very first detective story ever published, all play bit roles in this drama most improbable. Never fear, though, for just as in any of the Bard of Avon's productions, the strange and wonderful cast of characters will all be reconciled by the time the final curtain falls.

Our picaresque tale begins on August 4, 1821, in Philadelphia, when Samuel C. Atkinson, publisher, and Charles Alexander, journalist, acquired the subscription list and presses of a defunct newspaper, along with the building on Market Street, a few doors below Second, where it had been published for decades.<sup>2</sup> It just so happened that this newspaper had been the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which in the middle years of the eighteenth century had been published by Benjamin Franklin. These circumstances gave Atkinson's and Alexander's newborn publication, the *Saturday Evening Post*, a kissin' cousin relationship to Franklin's newspaper that the *Post*'s twentieth-century proprietor, Cyrus Curtis, would puff into a bogus claim of direct descent. In its formative years, the *Post* was moderately successful, thus inspiring one of its owners to launch a sister publication in the City of Brotherly Love.

In 1826 Atkinson produced a new monthly that he christened *The*

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1 The author would like to thank Eric P. Newman and R. W. Julian for calling his attention to *The Casket* as a possible source of numismatic information.

2 Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, *The Literary History of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co., 1906), p. 227.



*Casket: Flowers of Literature, Sentiment and Wit*. Initially, *The Casket* was the *Reader's Digest* of the 1820s, consisting of excerpts of previously printed articles, especially those from the *Post*. As time passed, however, Atkinson began to publish more original literature, along with poetry, extracts from books, and humorous anecdotes. One such book excerpt demonstrates that *The Casket's* pages were not a powerful force for ecumenicalism: "In the year 1806, I was present at the worship of the goddess Doorga, as performed at Calcutta. Four sets of singers were present, who entertained their guests with filthy songs, and danced in indecent attitudes before the goddess. The whole scene produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror."<sup>3</sup>

*The Casket* stood out among its competitors for its illustrations; several superb engravings accompanied the text in every issue, some of which, such as a series of plates illustrating the latest Paris fashions, and the fold-out maps of nations described in the text, were hand-tinted in vivid hues. *The Casket's* circulation grew slowly but steadily, and Samuel Atkinson reaped gratifying profits.

By 1831, *Atkinson's Casket*, as it was by then styled on its masthead, had become a magazine with a strong subscriber base in Philadelphia, but also had patrons hailing from every state in the Union. Atkinson, therefore, was on the lookout for local topics that would also appeal to a national audience. He found the ideal combination of attributes in a Philadelphia institution the products of which were known from the Atlantic seaboard to the westernmost boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase: the second Mint of the United States. The resulting story minutely detailed the rooms contained in a structure that had not yet been erected, complete with an illustration of an edifice that did not yet exist, but this prematurity nicely suited the restless ambition of Andrew Jackson's adolescent America.

The issue of *Atkinson's Casket* in which the story about the Mint appeared — October 1831 — contained its customary complement of sentimental literature, aptly illustrated by the poem "The First Night in the Grave," subheaded, apparently without irony, "Written for *The Casket*." The engraving of the second Mint occupies the bottom half of page 460, depicting the handsome Greek Revival structure that stood just south of Philadelphia's current City Hall. William Strickland

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<sup>3</sup> *The Casket*, March 1831, p. 139.

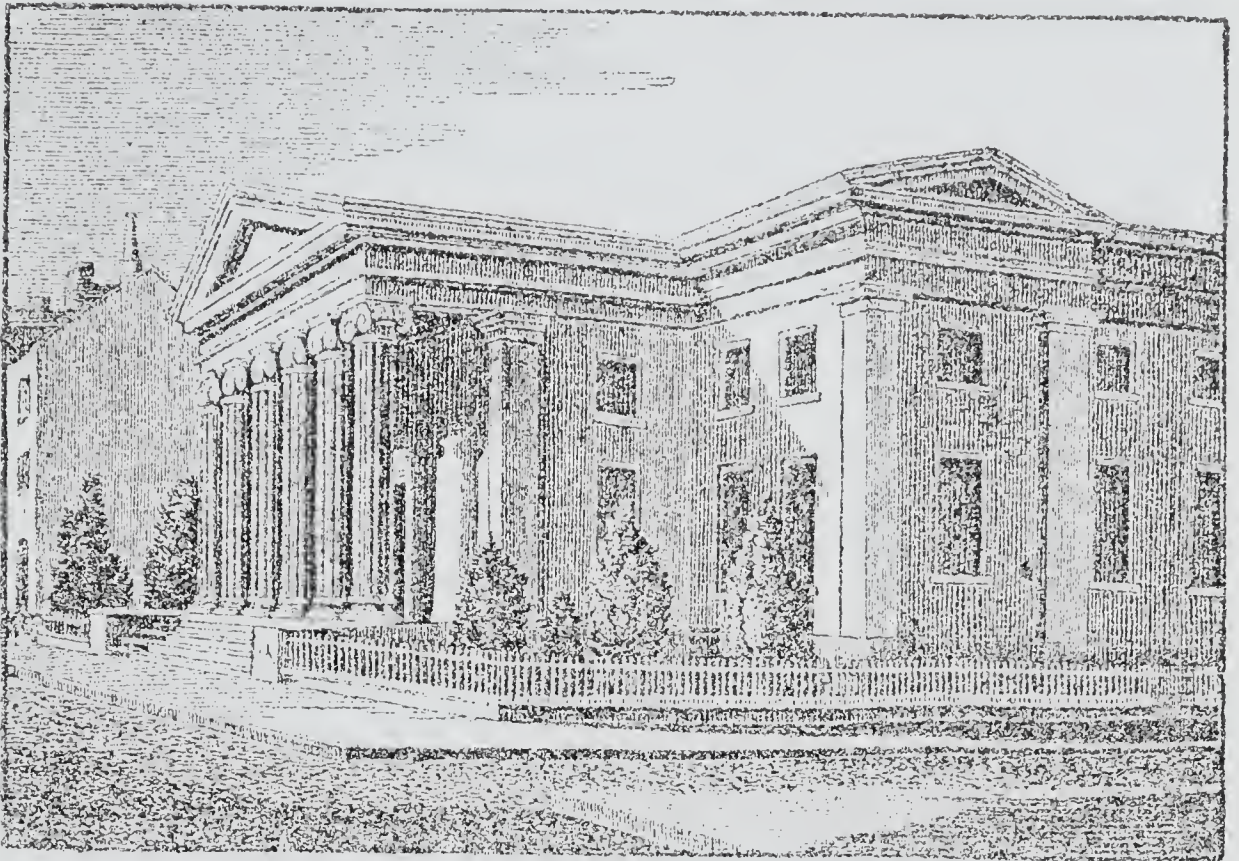
designed the Mint with the inspiration of a temple on the Illysus, near Athens. The engraving depicts an oblique view of a portico, with its six Ionic-order fluted columns, as viewed from either its Chestnut Street (south) front, or its Penn Square (north) front, for both of these façades boasted porticoes. The accompanying story, whose author is not credited, runs from page 457 to 458. It provides a precise description of the Mint's external footprint, as well as a thorough tour of the floor plans on each of its three levels (basement, main, and attic), down to the dimensions of its individual rooms. This minutely detailed guide will be of interest to twenty-first-century numismatists:

#### MINT OF THE UNITED STATES.

A resolution in favour of the establishment of a Mint, was adopted by the old Congress on the 21st of February, 1782. The question it appears was at different periods resumed under the Confederation, and on the 16th October, 1796, an ordinance was passed on the subject, which, however, was not carried into effect. The Mint of the United States was eventually instituted at Philadelphia, by an act of Congress, under the Federal Constitution, passed the 2d day of April, 1792, and a few specimens of half dismes were issued before the close of that year. Early in 1793, the general operations of the establishment were commenced, in a very plain dwelling house, purchased for the object, on the east side of Seventh street, between High and Mulberry streets. A rude structure, in the rear of the same lot, was also occupied by a portion of the machinery. In this simple, unpretending style, the institution began its transactions, under the patronage of General Washington, then President of the United States, who duly appreciated its importance, and evinced, by occasional visits, his interest in its prosperity.

During the first few years, the supply of the precious metals, offered for coinage, being very limited, the annual expenditures of the Mint appeared disproportioned to its productiveness, and the general policy of such an establishment was more than once made a question in Congress. The steadfastness of public opinion in its favour, however, sustained it under these discouraging aspects; and it is worthy of remembrance as an example of republican constancy, that even the characteristic and highly liberal feature of the institution, the coinage of both gold and silver free of charge, was inviolably maintained. National in its character and its objects, the institution is supported by the public treasury for the general good, and depositors of gold or silver bullion, of standard fineness, receive, without expense, an equal weight in gold or silver coins.





NEW UNITED STATES MINT, PHILADELPHIA.

The average annual coinage of the Mint, from its commencement to the end of the year 1800, was in round numbers, \$362,000. The average of the next ten years, ending with 1810, was \$697,000. That of the succeeding ten years, ending with 1820, may be stated at \$1,166,000, and that of the ten years ending with 1830, at \$1,850,000. The whole coinage, from the estabment [*sic*] of the Mint to the end of the year 1830, may be stated at \$37,000,000.

With the progressive increase of the supply of bullion, the accommodations of the Mint were from time to time enlarged by partial additions; but an extension of power commensurate with the increasing demand for coinage, under the expanding operations of the Bank of the United States, it became apparent, could not be effected by these expedients. In 1827, the bullion deposited by that bank alone, exceeded the whole supply from all other sources in any previous year, and the whole coinage of that year exceeded three millions of dollars. These impressive facts rendered it indispensably necessary to solicit the consideration of Congress to the expediency of a more extended establishment. This was done in a communication from the Director, addressed to the Hon. John Sergeant, chairman of the committee on the Mint of the House of Representatives, December 23d, 1828. On the 2d of March, 1829, the measure received the sanction of the

government, and a liberal provision was made for its accomplishment.

Under this provision a lot was purchased, with the approbation of the President, fronting towards the south on Chesnut street, and towards the north on Penn Square, 150 feet, and extending along Juniper street 204 feet. On this site, on the 4th of July, 1829, was laid the corner stone of the Mint of the United States.

The building is of white marble, from designs furnished by Mr. Strickland. It fronts on Chesnut street, Penn Square, and Juniper street. Its dimensions are 123 feet on the fronts. The flanks, exclusive of the porticos, 139 feet — projection of the porticos each 27 feet — whole flank, 193 feet. The two porticos are each 60 feet in front, containing six columns on Chesnut street, and a like number on Penn Square.

The order is Ionic, taken from that celebrated Grecian Temple on the Illyssus, near Athens. The columns are three feet in diameter, fluted, and bound at the neck of the capital with an olive wreath. The entablature of the porticos extends entirely round the fronts and flanks of the building, supported by antæ at the corners, and surmounted at the extremes of the flanks by four pediments.

The building consists of a basement, principal, and attic stories. The officers' rooms, vaults, &c. on the Chesnut street front, and part of the western flank, are arched in a complete fireproof manner. The roof is entirely of copper, and covers the whole area of the building, with the exception of a court yard in the centre of the interior pile. The court is 55 feet by 84 feet, and is designed to afford a free communication, by means of piazzas in each story, with all parts of the building, and to give additional light to the various apartments contained within its walls.

The entrance from the south portico is into a circular vestibule, communicating, immediately, with the apartments of the Director and Treasurer, and the arched passages with those of the Chief Coiner, Melter, and Refiner, and with the rooms for receiving bullion and delivering coins. These passages communicate also by a marble stair-case in each wing, with the attic story, where are the apartments of the Assayers and Engravers.

The east flank and north section of the edifice contains the rooms appropriated to the operations of the Chief Coiner. The west flank contains those appropriated to the operations of the Melter and Refiner.

In the distribution of the interior of the edifice, no sacrifice has been made of utility to mere display. Solidity of structure, symmetry of arrangement, and a due adaptation of the several apartments to their destined uses, have been chiefly kept in view. Apartments designed for the accommodation of individual officers, are of dimensions merely sufficient for that purpose. Where extended space was essential, this has been finely appropriated.



The important processes of the assay are accordingly provided for, in two suites of rooms, each extending 50 feet by 20. The operations of the Melter and Refiner are accommodated in a range of apartments extending 95 feet by 32. The principal melting room is an apartment of 37 feet by 32, and the process of gold and silver parting, for which a contracted space would be peculiarly unfit, is provided for in an apartment of 53 feet by 32.

The preparatory operations of the Chief Coiner are accommodated in two rooms for laminating ingots, of 55 feet by 40, opening to the north portico; the propelling steam power being placed in the basement story. A range of apartments extending 120 feet by 32, is appropriated to the more immediate operations of coinage, and the machinery connected therewith. The principal coinage room extends 37 feet by 32, being sufficiently capacious to contain ten coining presses.

A distinct suite of three rooms in the attic story, extending 58 feet along the south main front, claims a brief notice. Here are preserved the standard weights of the Mint, and the balances for adjusting those in ordinary use. The central room is lighted through the dome, and is intended as a cabinet for the safe keeping of selected coins and medals, and also of mineral and metallic specimens instructive on the subject of metallurgy, and especially in regard to the precious metals. These apartments communicate with each other by ample folding doors, thus affording a spacious and appropriate accommodation to the commissioners of the annual assay appointed for that purpose of testing the conformity of the coins issued yearly from the Mint, with the standard weight and fineness of the coins of the United States as established by law.

The Mint was established "for the purpose of a national coinage," with provisions obviously designed to attract, by liberal facilities, an influx of the precious metals sufficient for an abundant currency. The reports of the Director to the President of the United States, laid annually before Congress, and from which the preceding statements of its issues are collated, exhibit the extent to which the purposes of the institution have been accomplished, hitherto, with imperfect means; and offer an auspicious promise of higher usefulness, under its extended powers, in future years.

Such a painstaking Baedeker of the second United States Mint would not be out of the ordinary save for one thing: in October of 1831, it was a construction site. Although it had been authorized by Congress on March 2, 1829, and its cornerstone laid on July 4 of that year, the pace of construction was desultory, so it was not until January of 1833 that old Mint on North Seventh Street was shuttered, and the second Mint actually commenced production. When the October 1831 issue of *The*

*Casket* appeared, it was not physically possible for the engraving to be prepared from observation of the actual building, nor the external or internal dimensions taken from actual measurement. It must be the case, therefore, that the author had access to Strickland's architectural drawings. This suggests that *The Casket's* second Mint story and illustration were among the first published, and further implies that the author had connections at the Mint.

The information to be gleaned from this article is invaluable. No known illustration of the second Mint, for example, offers a hint that it incorporated a large courtyard (55 by 84 feet) in the center of the structure. Moreover, the locations and sizes of the various offices and workshops are clearly identified. We learn that a range of apartments measuring 120 by 32 feet was devoted to striking coins, and that the principal coining room, 37 by 32 feet, held ten coinage presses. The dimensions of the spaces allotted for the Chief Coiner, the Assayer, and the Melter are precisely delineated. In a fitting numismatic touch, we even discover that the roof was entirely covered with copper.<sup>4</sup>

The article may have described and illustrated a building-to-be, but it did so with the sanguine expectation that, after thirty-nine years of enduring the motley cluster of structures on North Seventh Street, the people of the United States would soon have a Mint facility of which they could be truly proud. They would have to bide their time for nearly two more years before realizing that expectation, but in the event, the second Mint proved to be well worth the wait.

Now that the story of the article about the Mint has been told, it is time to lay *The Casket* to rest — so to speak. An ambitious entrepreneur named George Rex Graham (1813-1894) bought out Atkinson in 1839 to become *The Casket's* proprietor. This new regime lasted for only a few months, for in December of the following year, Graham made another periodical acquisition, and this one added a dollop of numismatic spice to his mélange of antebellum magazines.

Graham's takeover target was *Burton's Gentlemen's Magazine*, which was published in grand style by a colorful scoundrel named William Evans Burton (1804-1860). Born in England, Burton was an actor treading the boards both on the provincial and London stages when, in 1834, he emigrated to the United States, leaving his wife and young

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<sup>4</sup> *The Casket*, October 1831, pp. 457-458.

son behind. With a fine show of transatlantic impartiality, Burton married a 16-year-old American orphan, without ever divorcing his British wife, and, refusing to be limited to mere bigamy, he eventually took a mistress as well. He evinced a similarly eclectic appetite for show business in Jacksonian America, managing an eponymous theater in New York City, writing and producing successful plays, and acting, especially in comedies (his signature role was that of the profane simpleton Bob Acres, in William Brinsley Sheridan's "The Rivals").

In 1837 Burton launched a new venture, *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, published in America's periodicals capital, Philadelphia. This was, of course, an unabashed case of titular plagiarism, an obvious borrowing from *The Gentleman's Magazine*, the venerable (founded 1731) news digest of the British gentry. Burton aimed his version of the publication at an American audience somewhat lower in the brow. Nor were the contents any more original than the title, for many of the poems, stories, and essays on the outdoor life that filled its pages were borrowed from other sources.

Burton's editor from 1839 to 1840, on the other hand, was a bona fide original: none other than Edgar Allan Poe. Not yet celebrated as the master of the macabre in literature, Poe was a painstaking editor who insisted on taut literary standards for original submissions, and high production values for the magazine. The literary criticism he contributed to *Burton's* was inscribed largely in vitriol, and when Poe accused the distinguished American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of plagiarism, he instigated what became known in the world of American letters as "The Longfellow War." This and other controversies boosted the circulation of *The Gentlemen's Magazine* to 3500, but caused friction between Burton (who tried to sell his magazine without informing his editor) and Poe (who planned to launch his own competing Philadelphia-based journal, *The Penn*, without telling his employer). In June of 1840, Poe left the editor's post, and just six months later, Burton sold *The Gentlemen's Magazine* to George Rex Graham, for the sum of \$3500: one dollar per subscriber.<sup>5</sup>

Before completing the story of Graham and his two publications, however, it is necessary to bring Burton's biography to its (numismatic) conclusion. The erstwhile publisher used the proceeds from his sale of

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth Sherman, *Edgar A. Poe: Mournful and Never-Ending Remembrance* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991), p. 162.



*The Gentlemen's Magazine* to renovate his New York theater, which nonetheless eventually failed. Burton reverted to the literary scene, becoming editor of both the *Cambridge Quarterly* and *The Souvenir*, and combined literature and the theater in 1857 to produce his *Cyclopedia of Wit and Humour*. Books provided his avocation as well, for his private library ran to thousands of volumes, especially rich in works by and about William Shakespeare.<sup>6</sup>

The Attinelli-attuned numismatic bibliophile will recognize the October 8, 1860, J. Sabin *Catalogue of the Theatrical and Miscellaneous Library of the Late William E. Burton* as one of a host of antebellum auctions primarily composed of books that also offered sidelights of numismatic interest. Attinelli noted, "This great collection consisted principally of books. The coins (32 lots) are described on pp. 452 and 453...This collection formerly belonged to the well-known comedian, whose rare wit served to while away many an otherwise tedious hour."<sup>7</sup> The Sabin catalogue, with a superb engraving of Burton serving as its frontispiece, actually offers no coins at all, and a total of 35 medals (lots 6031-6063 and lots 6086-6088, which latter three Attinelli missed). The medals are mainly British in origin, with an admixture of European pieces. Only one — lot 6032 — is an American production, that being a "copy" (electrotype?) of "The Great Clay Medal." Lot 6063 revealed the limitations of the cataloguer's numismatic expertise, for it offers a "Handsome Unknown Medal."

Thus ends the thread of William Evans Burton, but the skein of George Rex Graham runs on. After buying *The Casket* from Samuel Atkinson in 1839 and *The Gentlemen's Magazine* from Burton in 1840, Graham merged the two to create another self-referential publication, *Graham's Lady's and Gentlemen's Magazine*, and bent to the task of building the first mass-circulation periodical in the United States. The flamboyant publisher standardized the "Graham Page" by offering the unheard-of sum of \$5 per printed leaf for high-quality submissions, thereby attracting the best authors to his door. He spent just as lavishly on the top illustrators of the day. And, demonstrating that his magazine's past was merely its prologue, in February of 1841, just in time

6 "William Evans Burton," Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Evans\\_Burton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Evans_Burton) (March 21, 2010).

7 Emmanuel Joseph Attinelli, *Numisgraphics* (New York: printed for the author, 1876), p. 20.

for its second issue, he brought Edgar Allan Poe back to the editor's chair.

Poe doubled as an author, and Graham's thus became the venue for the first publication of a detective story, its editor's own "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Poe resumed his customary evisceration of anything authored by Longfellow; indeed, James Russell Lowell suggested that Poe "sometimes mistakes his phial of Prussic Acid for his inkstand."<sup>8</sup> Caustic Poe's reviews may have been, but just as they had at *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, they sold copies. By March of 1842, the circulation of *Graham's* ballooned to an unprecedented 40,000 per month.

Not even this level of success could keep the volatile editor at his post. Beleaguered by controversies on front and flank, Poe departed in 1842, although he still contributed the odd article to *Graham's* for some time thereafter. Graham, to his erstwhile editor's chagrin, filled the chair with Rufus Wilmot Griswold, a move akin (in more recent times) to replacing Norman Mailer with Gore Vidal. Poe's legion of enemies rejoiced, but his friends shot back. A critic named Jesse E. Dow wrote: "We would give more for Edgar A. Poe's toe nail, than we would for Rueful Grizzle's soul, unless we wanted a milk strainer. Them's our sentiments."<sup>9</sup> Griswold ended the "Longfellow War," and took a slap at Poe besides, by signing the poet to an exclusive contract to write for *Graham's*. Another attempt to spite his predecessor backfired, however, when in 1844 Griswold rejected Poe's latest poem, so "The Raven" was first published elsewhere.

Just as the closing years of Burton's life had a numismatic flavor, so too did the denouement of Graham's career. In 1848, his big bets on the copper market went sour, and he was forced to sell his magazine in order to remain solvent. Never daunted, after only two years had passed, Mr. Graham recouped his fortune and repurchased his magazine, only to run into a competitive buzz saw named *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Within four years, he admitted defeat and sold his interest in *Graham's*. The new proprietors limped along for another four years before finally striking their colors in 1858.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Oberholtzer, *Literary History of Philadelphia*, p. 282.

<sup>9</sup> "Graham's Magazine," *Wikipedia* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graham%27s\\_Magazine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graham%27s_Magazine) (March 21, 2010).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

So it came to pass that the first glimpse of the second Mint came through a magazine that was connected with everything from the creator of Poor Richard to author of "Richard III." Soon, however, the Mint, the magazines, and the men who made them all settled into a forgotten chamber of the past, nevermore (as Poe would have said) to be mentioned until nearly 180 years had elapsed. All has now come to light, the moldering magazines have been opened once more, and the disparate characters have all been connected, which leaves it desirable to close, in homage to Shakespeare, with a couplet:

Now, my dear friends, you need never again ask it,  
Why the second Mint was first seen in *The Casket*.

### Help Promote the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Howard A. Daniel III sets up a club table to represent the Numismatic Bibliomania Society (and the International Bank Note Society, Numismatics International, and the Philippines Collectors Forum) at both of the annual American Numismatic Association events, the Florida United Numismatists (FUN), and the International Paper Money Show.

*The Asylum* and NBS membership applications are given to numismatists interested in the society from the table. Journals and applications for the other societies are also given out.

There are also world bank notes and world coins to give to young and new numismatists in a packet which includes a consolidated membership application form for all four groups. References are given to numismatists but especially to teachers and scout counselors, for them to use with their students and scouts.

Howard always needs volunteers to staff the table and needs your unwanted references, world banknotes, and/or world coins. Please contact Howard at [hadaniel3@msn.com](mailto:hadaniel3@msn.com) to make the donation arrangements. The best method to get them to him is to take them to one of the three shows, otherwise, you can mail them to him. Howard can also send a thank-you letter to each donor which will document their donation for tax purposes.



## “You Don’t Say”: Numismatic Quarterly Quiz

*Myron Xenos*

1. Which two official US mints used the same mint mark?
2. In what language was *Historia Numorum* originally published?
3. Name the 1878 Act that authorized the minting of silver dollars and name the 1918 Act that resulted in melting over 270,000,000 silver dollars.
4. The French, under Napoleon, invaded Spain in 1808 and deposed Charles IV, replacing him with Joseph-Napoleon, but who was the *real* king (in exile)?
5. Where was the first mint in the United States established in 1652? (Virginia only talked about it in 1645)
6. What is the Trial of the Pyx in England all about?
7. What did Spencer Clark do that caused Congress to pass a law forbidding it?
8. What year were coins first struck at West Point?
9. Describe the edge of the US 20-cent piece (without looking).
10. Which direction does the bust face on flowing hair coinage?
11. National Bank Notes were printed by three different banknote companies. How many can you name?
12. How many 1804 dollars were struck in 1804?
13. Due to a coin shortage in 1862, the Secretary of the Treasury legalized what item of value as money?
14. What is the significance of the star on the Grant with star commemorative half dollar? (Page 279 of the 2009 Red Book, if you are looking)
15. Whose design was used on the reverse (not obverse) of the Barber dime?

Answers on p. 50.

## Wayte Raymond and the *Coin & Medal Bulletin*: A Voice from the Past

*John W. Adams*

Much has been written on the subject of Wayte Raymond. His immense contributions to the hobby cannot be challenged. His publications demonstrate that his knowledge of numismatics was both broad and deep.

Raymond became a professional numismatist in 1908 at the age of twenty-two. His first public auction sale—on December 8, 1910, conducted under his own name—contained material the breadth of which would have done credit to someone far more established. The highlight was a nearly complete set of quarter eagles with most of the rarities. His second sale, held on April 14, 1911, featured extensive runs of high-grade large cents and Hard Times tokens, as well as a Higley threepence and a *Gloriam Regni* five sols.

In 1912, the United States Coin Company was formed and Max Mehl journeyed northward to forge a formidable partnership. Their first fixed-price list, issued in September of that year, offered a wealth of better material: Massachusetts silver, a long run of high-condition large cents, a 1794 dollar, extensive branch-mint silver, and an 1805 half dime in XF. Catalogue Two, issued in the following month, revealed a hefty inventory—in all probability much larger than any dealer carries today. The gold section boasted an 1875 proof \$1 plus MS examples of 1860-D and 1861-D. The list of quarter eagles revealed an 1806 over 5 in nearly MS, as well as an 1845-O and an 1854-O. Within the offering of \$3 pieces was an 1876 proof. And so forth. Clearly, the young firm had money behind it and was using its capital to gain entrée into the upper echelons of the collecting fraternity.

With the departure of Mehl, the momentum of the United States Coin Company decreased. There were no more public auctions until 1917 and no more impressive fixed-price lists. Raymond's career, no longer meteoric, needed a catalyst. One catalyst, in this case, was

the publication of Vol. 1 No. 1 of the *Coin & Medal Bulletin* in April 1916. Joined in this endeavor by Edgar H. Adams, Raymond defined the *Bulletin's* mission in this way:

Numerous publications bearing upon various phases of American numismatics have been issued, yet there remain many series of coins that have never been mentioned at all, or, if so, only in the most meagre manner... The aim of the publishers will be to supply these deficiencies, so far as practicable, and to issue articles, properly illustrated, in a manner complete enough to be of numismatic value.<sup>1</sup>

In the next eleven issues, the two publishers attacked Americana with a vengeance. Pithy contents included lengthy listings of Civil War tokens (Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kentucky, and Tennessee), lists/discussions of Hard Times tokens, a history of John Law medals, description of Betts medals, Central and South American proclamation pieces, and a panoply of oddities, each one illustrated as well as analyzed.

The *Bulletin* also devoted coverage to areas in addition to tokens and medals. Raymond began a series on the die varieties of early dollars, beginning in 1794 but never getting past 1799. Adams made regular forays into pioneer gold, his most notable article covering a Massachusetts and California Company \$5 gold piece and five gold ingots made by Frederick D. Kohler, ranging in size from \$36.55 to \$54.09.

Another feature of the *Bulletin* is its advertisements, perhaps a third of the pages. In addition to specific listings, Raymond offered a large collection of communion tokens and Adams extolled a nearly complete set of coinage of the Hispanic empire in America. Adams also offered his own publications; a set of the fifteen plates for *Hard Time Tokens* was priced at \$5.00 (a plated H. P. Smith catalogue was listed at \$3.50, by way of comparison.)

By any standard, Raymond and Adams offered a most appetizing menu. Regrettably, there were few gourmets that bought into the menu, even at a modest annual subscription of fifty cents. Thus, with the March 1917 issue, the publishers announced, "We must confess that the support we have received has not been so extensive as we would have liked and which would have made possible the continuance of our publication by defraying at least a far proportion of the expense involved."<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Coin & Medal Bulletin*, vol. I, no. 1, inside cover.

2 *Coin & Medal Bulletin*, vol. II, no 3, inside cover.



No mention is made of the actual number of subscribers. However, the content was good enough to have been saved and yet George Kolbe, in his lengthy and distinguished career, has seen only three examples: 1) Lot 1 in the sale of the Stack Family Library (January 2010), 2) Lot 763 in Ford I (Raymond's own copy?), and 3) a set in the Connecticut State Library. The ANS, Yale, Michigan, New York Public, and Newberry libraries also own copies but, still, the list is a short one. Thus, it can be inferred that the subscriber list was also short, most likely in the low double digits.

The sad fate of the *Coin & Medal Bulletin* demonstrated that Americana was not a place for a dealer to make a living then (any more than it is today). The material may be fascinating, but the size of the market was relatively small. Fortunately, Wayte Raymond had his regular auction upon which to fall back. In addition he was developing a mail-order business with the carriage trade, an activity which would have been enhanced by the cachet of Americana. After all, wealthy collectors were more likely to be attracted by cachet than by the volume of advertising in *Life* magazine,

Thus, in the most narrow sense, the *Coin & Medal Bulletin* was a failed enterprise. However, it did and does serve to give the measure of the man. Here displayed is a numismatist with intellectual curiosity and an inclination to teach. These virtues were not of commercial interest perhaps, but they do explain perhaps how Raymond went on to attract the patronage of Malcolm Jackson, H. O. Granberg and W. W. C. Wilson. The *Bulletin* is not an important repository — its life was too brief for that. However, it is a clear window into the soul of a man who went on to shape our hobby. In an obituary in the February 1957 issue of *The Numismatist*, John J. Ford, Jr., provided an eloquent description of Raymond's many accomplishments. The *Bulletin* stands as corroboration of Ford's assertions.

# The Large Cent Collection of Charles Lorenzo Clarke

*Max B. Spiegel*

While looking through a group of a dozen old coin envelopes that I have, I was struck by the amount of detail that the former owner once put into his descriptions of their contents (Figs. 1 and 2). There are references to Chapman, Mehl, Bluestone, and others, as well as notes about where the coin was purchased, how much it cost, the variety and its identifiers, the rarity, and other notes. A small paper inside each envelope indicates the date that the coin was “washed” (see Fig. 2). These envelopes once housed large cents, and the date is listed along with the variety. The only clue as to who once treasured these coins is the name “Chas. L. Clarke” and the location—Schenectady, NY—written on some of the envelopes.

My first thoughts were that Charles L. Clarke must be related to the famous large cent collector T. James Clarke. Both were residents of New York, collected large cents, and lived around the same time. While that sounded promising, genealogical searches revealed no connections. The 1920 Federal Census, however, indicated that there was a “Chas. L. Clarke,” 66 years old, originally from Maine but now living in Schenectady with a wife and son. One of the first results for “Charles L. Clarke” on Google is the Bowdoin College Library George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, which houses the

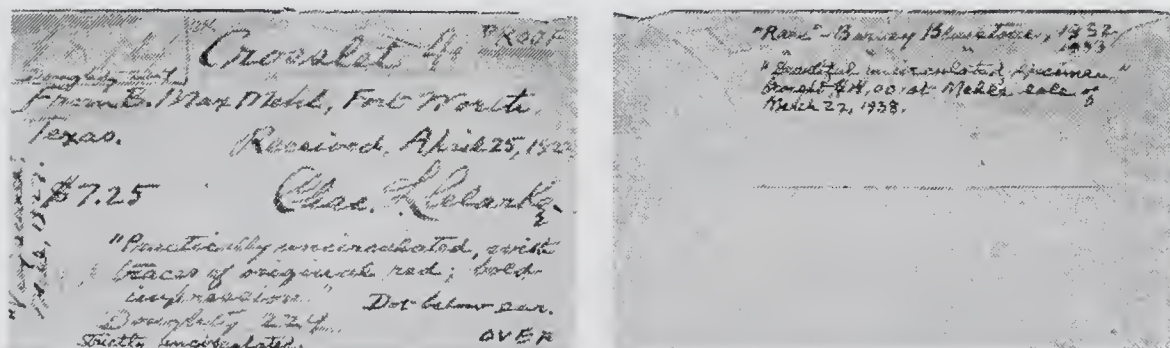


Figure 1. Envelope for an 1814 cent.

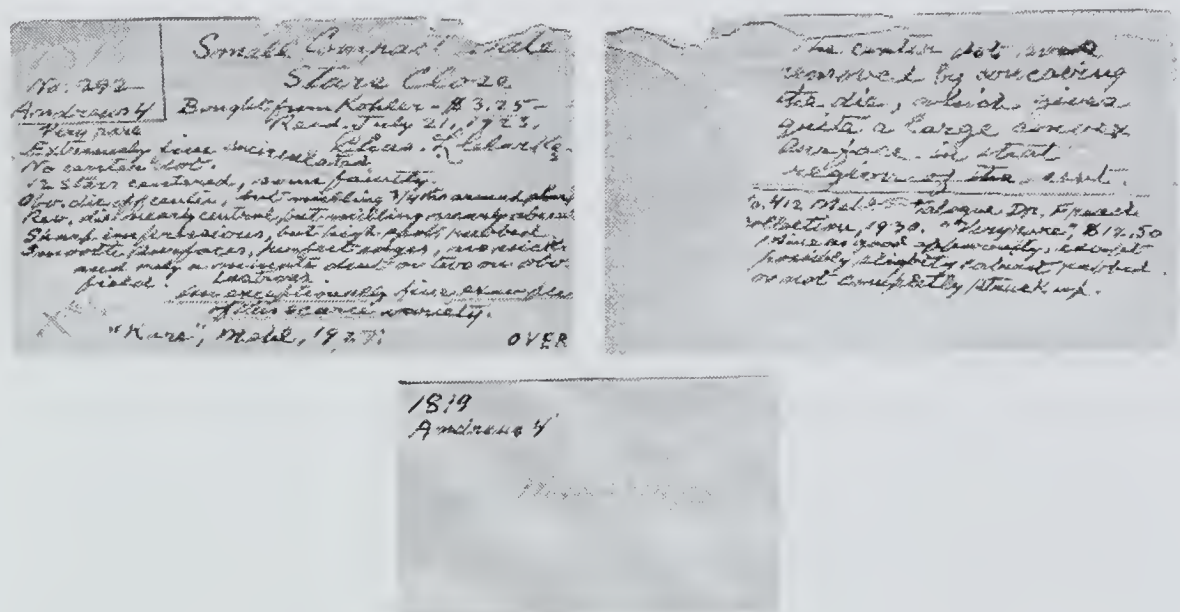


Figure 2. Envelope for an 1819 cent with paper slip indicating date washed.


Charles Lorenzo Clarke papers. Although I was doubtful that these could be the same person, a quick look through the contents showed a listing for "W.F. Dunham Collection, 1941." This is undoubtedly B. Max Mehl's auction of the William Forrester Dunham Collection — and proof that this was the right Charles L. Clarke.

Charles Lorenzo Clarke, it turns out, was a well-known mechanical engineer who was one of Thomas Edison's top scientists. Among his many accomplishments was the building of Edison's first steam-powered electrical dynamo (generator) at Menlo Park, New Jersey. Clarke was born on April 16, 1853, in Portland, Maine, to Daniel and Mary Lewis (née Bragg) Clarke. After attending Portland High School he worked as an assistant engineer for the Boston and Maine Railroad, and in 1875 he graduated from Bowdoin College. His passport application from 1900 (Fig. 3) describes him as 5 feet 7½ inches tall, with a medium forehead, gray eyes and glasses, a Roman nose, a regular mouth, a round chin, light brown hair, a fair complexion, and an oval face. With his distinctive signature — the same that appears on a few of his coin envelopes — Clarke made an oath of allegiance to the United States.

Clarke began work at Menlo Park on February 1, 1880, as a laboratory assistant to Thomas Edison. Just two years later he was made the first Chief Engineer of the Edison Electric Light Company of New York City (later to become Consolidated Edison). In 1886 Edison moved



34-48



OCT 6 1900

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

STATE OF NEW YORK,  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

Charles L. Clarke, a NATIVE AND LOYAL CITIZEN  
OF THE UNITED STATES, do hereby apply to the Department of State at Washington for a  
passport for myself and ~~wife and my minor children as follows:~~  
born at \_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 18\_\_\_\_, and

In support of the above application, I do solemnly swear that I was born at \_\_\_\_\_  
Portland in the State of Maine, on or about  
the 16 day of April, 1859, that my father is a Native citizen of  
the United States; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being  
at New York in the State of New York  
where I follow the occupation of mechanical draftsman; that I am about to go abroad  
two years temporarily; and that I intend to return to the United States in about  
therein.

### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the  
United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and alle-  
giance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or  
purpose of evasion: SO HELP ME GOD.

Sworn to before me this 5th day of Oct, 1900. Chas. F. Calverley  
of N.Y. City.  
NOTARY PUBLIC, New York City and County.  
COMM. EXPIRES 1901

### DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT.

Age: <u>47</u> years.	Mouth: <u>Regular</u>
Stature: <u>5</u> feet, <u>7 1/2</u> inches, Eng.	Chin: <u>Pointed</u>
Forehead: <u>Medium</u>	Hair: <u>Light Brown</u>
Eyes: <u>Gray (Glasses)</u>	Complexion: <u>Fair</u>
Nose: <u>Roman</u>	Face: <u>Oval</u>

### IDENTIFICATION.

New York, Oct 5 1900.

I hereby certify that I know the above named Chas. L. Clarke  
personally, and know him to be a native-born citizen of the United States, and that the facts  
stated in his affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Wm. C. Gilbreath  
25 Beekman St.  
N.Y. City

Return Passport to  
**EDSON C. MARSHALL,**  
UNITED STATES PASSPORT AGENT,  
U. S. Court and Post Office Building,  
ROOM 52. NEW YORK CITY.

Figure 3. Clarke's passport application from 1900.

the company to Schenectady and Clarke went too. The company was renamed the Edison General Electric Company in 1890 (in 1892 it was simplified to General Electric) and Clarke continued to work there until he retired on November 1, 1931. He and his wife, Edna F. Thurston, had four children: John Curtis, Mary Willatowski, Daniel William, and Charles, Jr. On October 9, 1941, Charles L. Clarke died in Newton, Massachusetts.

It is not surprising that the coin envelopes were written by a mechanical engineer. The meticulous notes about each coin are typical of an engineer's attention to detail. He describes the characteristics of the die variety, the quality of the strike, and the condition in depth. Clarke records comments from different auction catalogues about the rarity of each variety as well as the prices realized. The coins purchased from the earlier 1920s are attributed by Doughty<sup>1</sup> number, while the later ones indicate the Andrews<sup>2</sup> variety. Although Andrews was published before Doughty, and both had been out for over three decades by the 1920s, I suspect Clarke did not have a copy of the original 1883 printing of Andrews. Therefore, he used Doughty until purchasing either the Gutttag Bros. or the Mehl reprint, both published in 1924.

Clarke was clearly a serious collector and appears to have been active from 1922 to 1938. His careful notes not only tell us about Clarke, but they also provide insight about large cent collecting and numismatics during the 1920s and 1930s. He made purchases from B. Max Mehl, Henry Chapman, Rudolph Kohler, St. Louis Stamp & Coin Co., Elder Coin & Curio Co., and Barney Bluestone. Kohler also served as Clarke's agent on at least on occasion. Rarity was particularly difficult to determine, and Clarke cites the opinion of different coin dealers — especially B. Max Mehl's catalogue of the French Collection — about the rarity. Rather than repeat the information on all of the envelopes, I have included images of a few of the more interesting ones. These coin envelopes act as windows to the numismatic past from the perspective of a brilliant large cent collector.

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1 Francis W. Doughty, *The Cents of the United States* (New York: Scott Stamp & Coin Co., 1890).

2 Frank Andrews, *An Arrangement of United States Copper Cents, 1816-1857* (Vineland, N.J.: printed for the author, 1883).

## Enjoying Numismatic Reading

*Dave Hirt*

Returning home this spring after a lengthy absence, I had quite a bit of numismatic reading to catch up with. I was pleased to find a number of articles about or that mentioned numismatic literature.

In *The Numismatist*, Neil S. Berman's interesting series on coin auction sales and auction catalogues was enjoyable reading for me. The section on American auctions continued through the January, February, March issues. Also in the January issue, Q. David Bowers wrote a fine article giving a review of a Karl Moulton catalogue and telling of some of the pleasures and challenges of collecting numismatic literature. In the March issue Rusty Goe revisits the 1982 auction of the United States Gold Coin Collection (the Eliasberg collection). The Eliasberg auction catalogue is pictured. All three of these issues offered book reviews, the longest being a page-and-a-half review of *The Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit, and Independence in the Republic of Texas*, by James Bevill. Another article of interest in the March issue is the one by David W. Lange, writing on "Older Numismatic Books of Interest." He notes that he has been building his numismatic library for 35 years, and mentions a few of his favorite books.

Also in the March *Numismatist* was the obituary of Robert H. Lloyd, the ANA's oldest member at age 103. He was an ANA member for an amazing 83 years. In former days he wrote many articles in *The Numismatist*.

I then looked at the *ANS Magazine* Winter 2009 issue. I always enjoy reading articles in this magazine, including book reviews in each issue. In this issue there was a very interesting article by ANS librarian Elizabeth Hahn, "The Rare Books and Special Collections of the ANS Library," with plates from two of the rare books in the library.

Then there was *Penny-Wise*, the official publication of Early Ameri-



can Coppers. The January 2010 issue reprinted two early publications: a priced catalogue of Edward Cogan's first sale of November 1, 1858, and the 1869 edition of *Varieties of the Copper Issues of the United States Mint in the Year 1794* by Edward Maris. I do not have a copy of this rare publication in my library so it was fun to read through. The quaint names Maris gives the different varieties are interesting. They remind me of a comment by A. G. Heaton in the January 1895 issue of *The Numismatist*, describing Dr Maris: "He uses the language of the Friends."

Then there were the auction catalogues that had arrived while I was gone. I had read them on-line while away, but having the real thing in my hands is much better. The Kolbe catalogue of the Stack Family Library is worth many hours of reading. There was a gap in numismatic literature sales with the deaths of Ken Lowe, Frank Katen, and John Bergman, and the lack of auctions by Orville Grady. Now, with David Fanning and David Sklow joining Charles Davis, George Kolbe, and Fred Lake, things seem to be humming again, and now David Fanning and George Kolbe have formed a partnership.

Answers to the Numismatic Quarterly Quiz (see p. 41): 1) Dahlonga and Denver (at different times); 2) English; 3) Bland-Allison Act 1878, Pittman Act 1918; 4) Ferdinand VII; 5) Massachusetts; 6) verifying weight and fineness of coins; 7) put his own face on fractional currency; 8) 1974; 9) plain edge; 10) right; 11) American Bank Note, National Bank Note, Continental Bank Note; 12) None. They were dated 1803. The 1804 dollars were struck in 1834 and maybe later. (Some people in China are still striking their version.); 13) postage stamps; 14) no significance; 15) James Longacre (Barber did the obverse).

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